
215.71**Prenatal Weight Gain Charts****Overview**

Introduction

Weight gain during pregnancy is one of the primary determinants of a healthy outcome. Prepregnancy weight is used to determine individualized weight gain recommendations. This policy describes how to calculate BMI, plot and evaluate prenatal weight gain charts.

If prepregnancy weight is unknown

The data system requires a valid entry in the field, prepregnancy weight. If the weight is unknown,

- Visually assess the woman's weight status category to decide if she was most likely underweight, normal weight, overweight or obese before conception.
- Calculate the number of weeks gestation.
- Refer to a prenatal weight gain for her weight status category and determine the mid-point for the expected weight gain based on weeks gestation.
- Subtract the expected weight gain from the woman's current weight and record this figure as the prepregnancy weight.

If current maternal weight exceeds scale capacity

If it is not possible to weigh an applicant because her weight exceeds the capacity of the scale, ask her if she has been weighed recently and what her weight was. It will also be necessary to estimate pregnancy weight gain to date unless she brings weight data from her primary provider or other source of prenatal care.

Chart used

The prenatal weight gain chart printed by the data system is based on the chart produced by the Institute of Medicine/ and National Research Council in 2009.

In this policy

This policy covers the following topics.

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Calculating BMI for Women

Purpose The pregnant participant's prepregnancy Body Mass Index (BMI) is used to determine the recommended weight gain range.

Data system calculates BMI The data system will calculate the prepregnancy BMI.

Using a calculator To calculate BMI using pounds and inches, follow the steps below.

Step	Action
1	Convert any fractions to decimals. Example: 145 pounds, 6 ounces = 145.38 67 ½ inches = 67.5
2	Insert the values into the following formula: • [weight (lb) / height (in) / height (in)] X 703 = BMI Example: [145.38 lb / 67.5 in / 67.5 in] X 703 = 22.4

Note: See Policy 215.74 for decimal conversions for inches and ounces.

Using a copy of the chart Follow these steps to estimate BMI.

Step	Action
1	Locate height on the horizontal axis.
2	Locate weight on the left vertical axis.
3	Find the point where the height and weight intersect.
4	Estimate BMI by reading the bold number on the dashed line that is closest to the point where height and weight intersect.

Pregnant adolescents Use the same BMI cut-offs to determine weight status and weight gain recommendations for adolescents.

Note: There is no research to support using the NCHS BMI-for-age chart to define prepregnancy BMI weight categories for pregnant adolescents.

Plotting Prenatal Weight Gain

Purpose	Weight gain during pregnancy is one of the primary determinants of a healthy outcome. The rate of weight gain provides information about blood volume expansion, fetal growth, and maternal health status.
Data system plots charts	The data system will plot the prenatal weight gain charts automatically. These charts can be viewed and printed.
Subsequent appointments	At subsequent appointments, the system will plot weight gain at the point corresponding to number of weeks' gestation.
Manually plotting charts	Use the following materials to accurately plot prenatal weight gain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prenatal Weight Gain Chart in Pounds, • Colored pen for highlighting expected weight gain, and • Straight edge or plotting guide such as an Accuplot.
Manual charts: Known weight	Follow these steps to plot prenatal weight gain when prepregnancy weight is known.

Step	Action
1	Record week of gestation and weight in the Weight Record section of the chart for future reference.
2	Highlight the weight gain range corresponding to the woman's BMI.
3	Record prepregnancy weight on blank line to left of zero on left axis of grid.
4	Add 5 lb. increments to prepregnancy weight to complete blanks up left axis.
5	Mark an "X" at the point on the grid that corresponds to today's weight and weeks of gestation.
6	Record relevant comments in the Weight Record that may be useful for interpretation of weight gain pattern (e.g., out of food, edema, nausea resolved).

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Plotting Prenatal Weight Gain, Continued

Manual charts: Follow these steps to plot prenatal weight gain if prepregnancy weight is unknown.
Unknown weight

Step	Action						
1	Record week of gestation and weight in the Weight Record section of the chart for future reference.						
2	Record “unknown” in blank for prepregnant weight (in upper left corner) and on the back of the chart.						
3	Estimate the woman’s BMI category (low, normal or high) and highlight the corresponding recommended weight gain range.						
4	Mark an “X” on the highlighted dashed line at the point that corresponds to the correct number of weeks gestation for today’s visit.						
5	Use the table below to determine the next step. <table border="1"> <tr> <th>IF the “X” falls...</th><th>THEN...</th></tr> <tr> <td>on a horizontal line</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move along that line to the left vertical axis, and • record today’s weight on the blank line at the left. </td></tr> <tr> <td>between horizontal lines</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move horizontally to the left vertical axis, • adjust weight by up to ± 2 lbs. to move to nearest horizontal line, and • record adjusted weight on the blank line at the left. </td></tr> </table>	IF the “X” falls...	THEN...	on a horizontal line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move along that line to the left vertical axis, and • record today’s weight on the blank line at the left. 	between horizontal lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move horizontally to the left vertical axis, • adjust weight by up to ± 2 lbs. to move to nearest horizontal line, and • record adjusted weight on the blank line at the left.
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6	Add 5 lb. increments to weight to complete blanks up left axis.						
7	Record relevant comments in the Weight Record that may be useful for interpretation of weight gain pattern (e.g., out of food, edema, nausea resolved).						

Evaluating Prenatal Weight Gain

Introduction

A series of measurements is needed to accurately evaluate prenatal weight gain. This section provides guidelines for weight gain recommendations and indications that weight gain is inappropriate.

Reading the chart

Compare weight gain at any point in pregnancy to the line corresponding to the recommended weight gain range for the participant. The line is a midpoint in a range of weights, so a woman's weight gain may be plotted above the line at some visits and below the line at others. The pattern of weight gain, indicated by the slope of the line, is more important than the distance of the measurements from the line. However, measurements far from the line may indicate that weight gain is too fast or too slow.

Potential red flags: Singleton pregnancies

Use the table below to further evaluate weight gain during pregnancy. See Policy 215.61 for information about nutrition risk criteria related to pregnancy weight gain.

IF BMI is...	THEN inadequate gain in 2 nd and 3 rd trimesters is...	AND excessive gain in 2 nd and 3 rd trimesters is
<18.5	<1 pound per week	>1.3 pounds per week
18.5 to 24.9	<0.8 pounds per week	>1.0 pound per week
25.0 to 29.9	<0.5 pounds per week	>0.7 pounds per week
≥30.0	<0.4 pounds per week	>0.6 pounds per week

Note: Repeat weights if subsequent measurements are unusual. Further assessment, intervention and referral may be needed.

Monitoring weight gain in multifetal pregnancies

The provisional guidelines for twin pregnancies are as follows:

- Normal weight women should gain 37-54 pounds
- Overweight women should gain 31-50 pounds
- Obese women should gain 25-42 pounds
- For all women, a gain of 1.5 pounds per week in the second and third trimesters

For triplet pregnancies, the overall gain should be around 50 pounds with a steady rate of gain of approximately 1.5 pounds per week throughout the pregnancy.

References

- Institute of Medicine. Weight Gain During Pregnancy: Reexamining the Guidelines. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2009.
- Policy Memorandum 98-9-P: Nutrition Risk Criteria, Revisions 2-10

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